



Spectrolab Sets Sights on European Markets with Improved Spacecraft Solar Cell Designs

LOS ANGELES--(BUSINESS WIRE)--March 20, 2000--Spectrolab Inc., the world's leading manufacturer of spacecraft solar cells, has received U.S. government approval to provide state-of-the-art solar cells, panels, and arrays to major European spacecraft manufacturers.

Solar generators on spacecraft built by Dornier Satellitensystem GmbH (a DaimlerChrysler Company), Alcatel Space Industries, Alenia Aerospazio, and Matra Marconi Systems may now carry Spectrolab's high-power solar cell products.

Spectrolab's existing domestic customers include Space Systems Loral, TRW, Orbital Sciences Corporation, Ball Aerospace & Technologies Group, Lockheed Martin, Spectrum Astro, Boeing, and Hughes Space and Communications Company.

For the European market, the availability of Spectrolab's state-of-the-art solar cells is an enabling factor in the race to higher revenue-generating spacecraft. Flight-proven, multi-junction gallium arsenide solar cells boost on-orbit power capacities to meet increasing market demands.

In 1999, Spectrolab delivered the industry's first flight program solar cells with an average conversion efficiency of 24.5 percent. Next-generation cells reaching 27 percent efficiencies are now available. In total, more than 85,000 watts of Spectrolab multi-junction gallium arsenide solar cells are in orbit. An additional 393,000 watts have been delivered and are ready for flight integration.

In addition to the highest efficiencies available for large volume production, Spectrolab's standard-setting cells have provided manufacturers with a high return on investment through demonstrated outstanding on-orbit reliability, including maximum resistance to space radiation effects.

"Satellites carrying Spectrolab solar cells will have maximum functionality over their lifespan," said Dieter Zemmrich, president of Spectrolab. "Our focus is clear, and that is to help our customers increase satellite capacity and therefore increase revenue potential.

"To that end, we have established a new industry standard, but please expect more from Spectrolab, for we continue to push technology to provide innovative, risk-free products to our customers. In cooperation with the U.S. Air Force, under its Dual Usage and Technology program, we are developing space application solar cells with 35 percent efficiencies."

Multi-junction gallium arsenide solar cells are becoming the enabling power-generating source for rapid deployment of increased satellite capability. The use of more efficient solar cells makes it possible to increase the power on existing, and flight-proven, satellite models, and reduce time to market of today's satellite designs.

The added efficiency also makes it possible to have either a lighter, smaller array of equivalent power or a more powerful array with no increase in size or weight. Improved efficiency means a reduction in launch and on-orbit operational costs.

Spectrolab has boosted its solar cell production capacity to deliver nearly 1 megawatt of power per year to global spacecraft manufacturers, and has reduced the cycle time required to transfer new designs into flight production by nearly 50 percent.

Spectrolab, founded in 1956, has been supplying solar cells and panels to the space industry for 40 years. Pioneer 1, launched in 1958, carried the first body-mounted panels used in space. The following year, Explorer 6 used Spectrolab products and was the first satellite to use solar arrays instead of body-mounted panels.

Spectrolab is headquartered in Sylmar, Calif., a suburb of Los Angeles. It also is a leading supplier of Nightsun(R) searchlights and solar simulators. Visit Spectrolab's website at www.spectrolab.com. Hughes Electronics Corporation acquired Spectrolab in 1975. The earnings of Hughes Electronics, a unit of General Motors Corporation, are used to calculate the earnings per share attributable to the General Motors Class H common stock (NYSE:GMH).

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